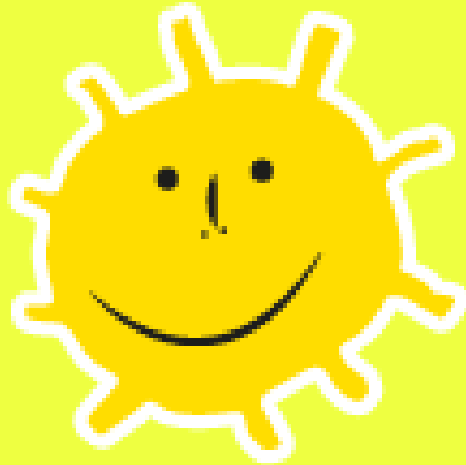


Sunshine & Smiles World Down Syndrome Congress



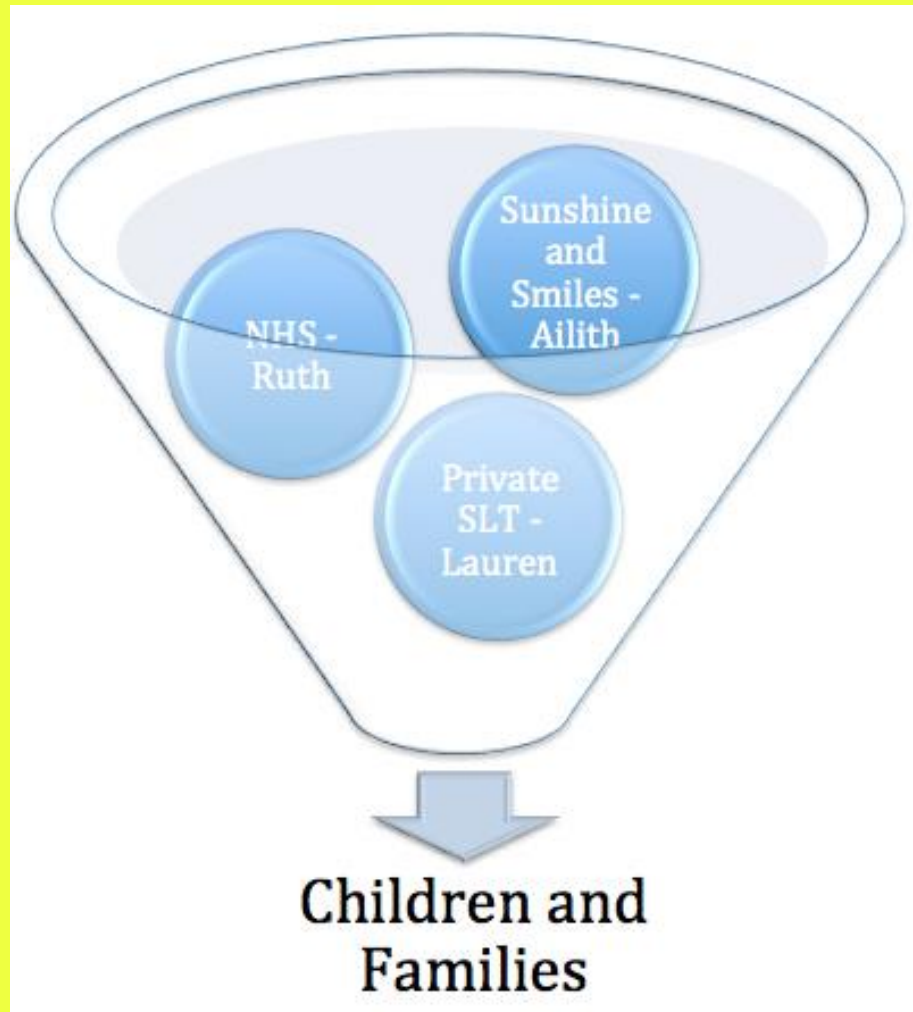
Sunshine  Smiles
Leeds Down Syndrome Network

Sunshine & Smiles - What We Do and Why

- Parent led - started in 2011
- Age specific social groups
- Activities - specific taught or coached activities - dance, swimming, football, cricket
- Support - peer support network, home & hospital visits, advocacy and help with forms, free access to complementary therapies & counselling
- Raising awareness
- Shifting preconceptions in the wider community

Context - Why and How

- After 12 months Speech & Language was identified as priority for families
- We approached Leeds NHS Community Healthcare
- Fundraising target of £2000
- September 2013 4 Speech & Language groups start
- July 2018 - 17 Speech & Language groups each month
- Free for families to access



A Collaborative Partnership



Speech and Language Therapy

Language is vital for mental and social development

“Speech and language therapy is the most important part of intervention services for children with Down syndrome if we wish to promote their **Cognitive** (mental) and **Social** development.”

Buckley, 2002

Why?

- The speech & language profile associated with Down syndrome can be uneven across language domains
- This is due to specific speech & language difficulties



Impact

NHS

South

CHAT

COMMUNICATION
HAPPENS
AROUND
TABLES

Supports Children and Young People's Speech and Language Therapy



Rationale for Group Intervention

- Individuals who have Down syndrome require direct teaching of specific aspects of speech, language and communication as it can be challenging to master the use of speech, language and communication skills
- With the right input, support and opportunities, communication skills can be developed.
- Speech & language should be a focus for parents, teachers and therapists from infancy through to adult life

How it Works

Group Aims and Objectives

- The aims and objectives for each group vary depending upon, age, ability and previous/current input; parental wishes and involvement are also considered when proposing and setting targets
- The focus is always on having fun while learning, as this is seen as the best way to engage and motivate students
- In addition wherever possible signing (Makaton) will be used as a visual aid to support and enhance communication

The Sunshine Model



0-12 months: Makaton baby sign

12 months - 4 years: Pre-school language groups - The fundamentals of communication, interaction and language development

4 years - 11 years: School age, speech, language development and social interaction

11 years - 15 years: Secondary school age, life skills and social communication

15 years + Young adults: Continued life skills and social communication

Impact of Intervention

Speech & Language therapy can:

- Develop and maximise communication skills in all environments
- Promote inclusion into school and social contexts
- Promote access to curriculum
- Minimise secondary difficulties arising out of communication impairments such as emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and literacy difficulties
- Support parents as child's communication needs change and develop throughout childhood/adolescence
- Enhance communication potential by skilling others in their use of facilitative strategies
- Maximise employment opportunities

Our Families

A short film demonstrating our sessions and hearing from some of our parents

[Sunshine & Smiles - Speech & Language Groups](#)



The Future

From birth to adulthood and beyond.....

- Fostering friendships and relationships
- Developing skills
- Promoting independence
- Creating life chances - Cafe 21



Thank you for listening



Any questions?

Sunshine & Smiles – Leeds Down Syndrome Network

- Email - hello@sunshineandsmiles.org.uk
- Tel - 07902 054355
- Twitter - @sun_smilesleeds
- Facebook - facebook.com/SunshineAndSmilesLeedsDownSyndromeNetwork
- Instagram – sunshineandsmilez

Please drop us a line, give us a ring or follow us ... we would love to hear from you!